

9/11 Commission files

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Mineta Interview

Scanned by Mike Williams of 911myths.com on 24th March 2009

Mineta Interview

Assessment of aviation security system at outset of tenure

- M: Prior to 9/11 hearings, most material dealt w/
Capacity of air traffic system; principal role of
Dept is safety - safety of various modes.
Security in aviation is resp of aviation
at airports - to protect FAA oversight &
Our role one of oversight and monitoring
rather than direct implementation.

Most emphasis on capacity not tank -
congestion. Things of that nature. Not
security

CI - Sum up

- M: Summer of 2000 - referred to as "sum
hell" b/c high # delays, particularly
high degree of industry dissatisfaction.
Focus was try to avert that as summer of '01
C: Role of oversight & monitoring - did any
specific issues come to your attention?

JF: Have to go ✓ seconds

don't recall - monitoring is removed

b/c and see other of FAA was really deal with
DOT and step removed from direct involvement.

CK: July 17 - FAA published a rule
Dual statement of threat - how y'know?

Rule itself yes, but again there are
a lot of statements that are general in
nature - prognosis about where going in
future. As a general statement safety/SEC
resp of FAA / DOT.

I think that come as result of IG
review of airline security

SB: My motivation rule was to make
changes to FOIA - sure, IG reports
and others that were pt of changes.

CK: In summer a lot of intel chatter &
warnings - your knowledge of ad briefings
etc.

M: I do get intel briefings - done by
CIA people who ... changed from before.

- Essentially I get a daily briefing on
intel matters - I had a high

infost b/c background, other ad service on
HIPS. I consider a big resp. of ours.
The kind of info was a lot of clutter, but
in terms of specificity or even the credibility
of source. But there was a great deal of
increased clutter. Post 9/11 we started
discussing whether agencies had gone back

9/11 Closed by Statute

was CP down on 9/11

- today 9/11 Closed by Statute in office of white security

Q: did anyone say to you after the
9/11 statement is safe?

M: NO

Q: Read if statements

are
Question from San: ① system designed to stop cars & carry
② we thought had been won

Report of FAA - reference: hijackings
worldwide

M: Philosophy about hijacking and generally
think, hijacking as they occur, illegal.
Even if they did occur a domino-like
approach was to cooperate, get the plane on
ground, and let law enforcement deal with

Wasn't one of Shwartz or Higby markers —
how to best control enviria hazard over to
get plane a opel.

Day of

① Notifications protocol

How followed on 9/11?
Who made calls when occur?

In any major incident, the basic issue is
why gather and our ground pos, is sort of Cola
actions. What did you do notify.

JF: We were in process of such — sort of CA
called us, I told Al Shwartz we already
decided to send Lee to AT
also in protocol we would contact C
Patterson.
by time we were in New York
time as much as we.

M No protocol / notifications —
today my rep. would not be to pick
up phone and call abroad.

did not speak to Eshabut

Requested by Col Patterson to go

CK M. No stuff

Had later about statement we had
some planes - maybe a week later.

No one AA CEO had any awareness of
concern from cockpit. I had called Capt J
Goodwin to ask if concerned from planes,
in another call I called and said Goodwin &
McCourt fix planes.

CK: arrival Quest -

M Got to W/T about 9:20
Spoke to Dr. Carl very
short, he had been talked to me
for about 3 minutes. SS Agent took
him to PEDC.

~~State~~ SVTS not underway

M Not aware of SVTS

Logs from W/T

his son Paul was sign
earlier: ~~we were~~

You heard of Dent Crash at PEDC.

V/P was already @ PEDC: he and C. Mar.

was there - as well as Karl Taucott.

CK: 2 lines of common questions - what info do we

M: CONVO back and forth b/w John
to across from VP
MM C @ end of table -
at every seat phone
phone w/ John & phone w/
Monk

Monitors for new programs were listed
me. Most of who carry a bag from
CONVO w/ Monke. Try to deal w/ issue of
unaccounted a/c - no that come later.
I related the convo of you & me carry w/
DRA - I'd say to

Mark what do you have a place -
what we have is a target - no
transponder - I asked can you have
position of a/c w/ you.

AA93 - I'm sorry AAFF.

Someone back up convo ad said we had a
call from Pal County police office also had AA
info perhaps.

Clearly to best of your knowledge it was plane that left Washington - yes.

Report plane down on OH/KY border - plane to later come

Speak to
Belgrave
~~Speaker~~

Talk to Belgrave about what he was doing.
his attorney about Belgrave was being
was TT.

Circle

back w/ Plumbey to AAF Assumption.

m: What was coming up - had no knowledge.
My time was one plane w/ John & Monk.

OK: DOT participated w/ SOTS? - later on SOTS.

m: No common b/t SOTS and ~~the~~
interagency SOTS.

→ Gene Norris - w/ Plumbey - went over to ~~FBI~~
around noon, to participate in SOTS.

Ground civil aviation - 9:50 - 10:00:

m: After plane went into Pinkerton - I

and to Monk we ought to bring plane down
MS send OK per pilot discretion. But I
didn't want pilot over us. Hesky. Screw
pilot discretion. Bring all the planes down.

Three of same Proj - That's a program, place.
We still had all three unexecuted for AFIC
maybe F-10 planes. Ground held on planes not
N.Y. planes.

→ Hand 3 of something happening back a place -
atka Pentagon and b/t Shruberville.

M: Ø (re decisions from PDC)
was in cocoon of my own belly to
joke on Monk

→ only other course I had was on
airline of Coast G. w/ several bridges.

OK: Shoot down
happened pretty much right after I go to
the plane.

Plane came in from east / comes down
~~other~~ fully preoccupied w/ own course.

CK: FAA/N Comm?

M: Monke mentioned something about contact w/ other APPB, don't know what - see before?

CK: Re scramble?

That was early one, it was as com
w/plane going down like - where you
man come in and said plane 0 miles off.
said code ~~and~~ still shot? yes. I don't
know that about, I think "I wonder
what that was all about" I ~~said~~
had also heard about scramble a/c.

* Someone in DM said Monke plane shot 7-9
miles away, coming up from Norfolk area.

I wonder if code given to shoot down as
Civil a/c.

93 → No one in PEDC had knowledge/awareness
of plane

I said Dick, did we shoot it down?
He said, club of sinkers. See if that
was all day

n... Wasn't until 12:30-1 until Art got call

I don't know if people travel to short doses

M: We had issued memo, end of Sept. - Oct - saying obvious
b/c could have military actions you.

CK: Turn to Gains?

Box cutters
No guns

PMI No inspection of industry as they have planes.

* Statement - Reference to Nonad

JF: "We" mean DOT / FAA

M: Yeah, that's the FAA.

Aftermath of 9/11

Was there an aftermath review with respect to day?

M: Not a formal sit down after 9/11 but kind of discussions. It started on 9/11 w/ Paulz asking me how can we get all back up. At time

Thought by next day. But at 11:15 bushy wet morning - I decided to stand up one Pk.

Then on Thurs we allowed pt a/cs to position a/c.

CK: Consider for resumption?

M: whole issue was security of airports & airports
By Sat on Sun had put together rapid response
team

CK: decision to return civil aviation, not if yes?

We had to clear w/ NSC. SS objected a lot.
National Airport not allowed to open for a couple
weeks.

CK: DOT ever issue a report for 9/11?

We have SF Gold medal award for 01 gave it
to NACTA for their work for busy a/c days
Safety.

4500 a/c brought down to 2 hrs
14 mins.

9/11 medal and ribbon - those awarded.

CK: Flight 77 disappears -

Pt of whole modernization & transition from old band radar to GDS - yes decision had been made to go to new system. In terms of primary radar, I think there were only one or two but these short doses - vast may still operating - pt of long term modernization.

CK: An Traffic Control Change post 9/11

Skills of ATC, in term of increased training, skills have been honed. We have a system now of a/c being tracked when plane deviates from flight plan, able to pull up that deviation, has more robust capability from ATC. I'm not that specific in terms of my knowledge of what's been done. We have done things to be more alert not just about common aviation but general aviation - things like My Spy app. GA community contacted about setting a/c.

No way of seeing a/c - not like a car w/ an ignition key.

Creation of TSA

Ch. Q Role in drafting of legislation

M: We did that (concept of TSA) very early on - WT had asked for a policy paper from us. So we submitted one, essentially in consultation w/ DOT and Treasury re who would be responsible for new agency. By Dec end early Oct we had submitted the papers - these determinations made would be given to DOT for setting up new agency.

difference opn w/ Ch. I e WT on how set up:
We thought role of TSA would be to set up
rules and monitor screening on all modes
would be done by One-benders

Recommendations

Data fusion: info sharing

We still work at day to day basis to coordinate, more so in future; Q is how to fix and manage all that into it's useable. If aviation is going to be the principal way of terrorist attack - which I don't think is very the case.
~~As of~~ ^{Right} March is still big Q.

Ref to flights coming in - how to get
more

manifest, that's TSA but we have an
interest in it b/c were working w/stakeholders
carriers and other nations.

Ck: TTIC - is it only your req?

m The issue is it forward looking enough to be
specific enough to take some level of action.

Is there a way to connect all the dots?

I don't think we've gotten to that yet.
Terrorists only have to get it at
once, we have to synchronize. Very high bar

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**MINETA INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
TEAM 8 OUTLINE**

Themes & Objectives:

**FAA/NORAD Relationship pre 9/11 and communications on 9/11
Substance, source and flow of information in PEOC on 9/11
Details of the shoot down order
Clarify record from May regarding key times and events**

**QUESTIONS CLARIFYING OR RELATING TO SECRETARY
MINETA'S MAY TESTIMONY BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

(1) Notification protocols on 9/11: In testimony last May before the Commission you stated:

"In an incident involving a major crash of any type, the Office of the Secretary goes into a major information-gathering response. It contacts the mode of administration overseeing whatever mode of transportation is involved in the incident. It monitors press reports, contacts additional personnel to accommodate the surge in operations, and centralizes the information for me through the chief of staff. In major incidents, it will follow a protocol of notification that includes the White House and other agencies involved in the incident."

Central to the Commission's work in evaluating the air defense response on 9/11 is an understanding of the notifications DOT and FAA made on 9/11, and in particular the information that was conveyed to DoD and NORAD.

a. Please describe the "protocol of notification" that was in effect on 9/11. How was it followed that day? Specifically, what notifications did FAA or DOT make to the White House, the Defense Department and NORAD?

6. In your May testimony you referenced the activation of DOT's Crisis Management Center on 9/11. In an air event emergency how does this crisis operations center interact with the FAA Operations Center. Who takes the lead/responsibility for notifying other agencies (i.e., White House, DoD)?

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(2) **Early Information\Notification to the White House:** Last May you testified that your chief of staff, Mr. Flaherty, first notified you that the FAA had received an "unconfirmed report" that a hijacking of an American Airlines flight had occurred.

- a. Were you informed that the FAA air traffic controllers – at approximately 0825 -- had actually overheard Arab voices in the cockpit of American flight 11 saying "we have some planes?" Did you learn of this statement at any point during the day? To your knowledge, based upon your conversation with Mr. Carty, the CEO of American Airlines, was the leadership of American aware of this statement?
- d. Regarding your early contacts with the White House, who did your office contact at the White House to inform them of the hijacking? Who from the White House called your chief of staff and requested that you operate from the White House? Did anyone from your staff go with you to the PEOC?

(3) **Time Secretary Mineta entered PEOC:** One of our challenges is to try and create an accurate timeline of the events that occurred on 9/11. To that end, let me revisit with you some of the times from your earlier testimony.

You estimated that you arrived at the PEOC at approximately 9:20 am. In terms of your arrival, you also stated that once at the White House, you first went to the Situation Room and spoke to Dick Clarke, and then went down to the PEOC.

- a. The logs that have been made available to us from the White House indicate that you entered the PEOC at XX. Does that time seem plausible to you?

[A couple of data points to use as reference: the second plane (Flight 175) hit the South Tower at 9:03; the Pentagon was hit at 09:38; records indicated that the Vice President did not arrive in the PEOC until approximately 09:40]

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(4) **Communications to\from PEOC:** Once inside the PEOC, you testified that you established two lines of communication: one with your chief of staff and a second with Monty Belger & Jane Garvey, both of whom were in the FAA operations Center.

a. What information were you receiving from them? What did you do with it? To your knowledge, was the PEOC receiving information from other sources regarding the status of hijacked aircraft, or were you (through your staff) the only source of this information? If there were other sources, what were they?

b. It is my understanding that Dick Clarke was chairing an interagency Secure Video Conference (SVTS) from the Situation Room, and the DOT and perhaps the FAA were participating in that.

Were you aware of the SVTS, and if so, who from DOT was participating in it? From the FAA? Was it already underway when you arrived at the Situation Room? Once you relocated to the PEOC, were you and/or the Vice President connected to the SVTS? How was information from the FAA regarding hijacked aircraft being coordinated between the PEOC and Situation Room?

c. The Vice President and others have discussed in the media that on the morning of 9/11 the PEOC was receiving false reports of aircraft that were supposedly inbound to Washington. I understand that this happened repeatedly – a duty officer or staffer would announce an inbound aircraft so many miles or minutes out and everyone would wait for a possible hit on the White House that never occurred.

Do you recall any such reports? Was the FAA the source of this information? If so, what were they seeing? To your knowledge, post-9/11, was there any effort to track down the source of these false reports?

(5) **Communications with NORAD:** With respect to NORAD, last May you testified “Within a few minutes, AA 77 crashed into the Pentagon. At this time, as we discussed the situation with the North American Aerospace Defense commander and his staff, we considered implementing an emergency system of coordinated air traffic management to allow maximum use of defensive activities.”

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- a. Did you speak directly with the NORAD commander (General Eberhart)? If so, please tell us the substance of these communications. In terms of time, did this conversation occur within a few minutes of the crash of AA77. Who is “we” in this statement?
- b. Prior to 9/11, were you familiar with NORAD? Please describe your relationship (if any).
- c. Looking back on the situation now, it is apparent that an effective air defense operation on 9/11 required close communications between the FAA and NORAD. Was that clear to you at the time? What steps did you take to ensure coordination between the FAA and NORAD?

(6) **Decisions from the PEOC:** What were the key decisions that were made from the PEOC on the morning of 9/11? Who was making these decisions, and how were they being conveyed to the relevant agencies?

(7) **Details of Shoot Down Order:** With respect to the order authorizing the shoot down of commercial aircraft, last May you described a scene in which a young man came in and informed the Vice President that a plane was 50 miles out, then 30 miles out, then 10. He then asked “Do the orders still stand?” And the Vice President turned around and said of course the orders still stand, have you heard anything to the contrary?

- a. Your testimony was that at the time you did not know what this was about, because you were not there when the Vice President first issued the shoot down order, is that correct?
- b. Approximately how long after you entered the PEOC did this conversation that you described take place?
- c. Do you know in relation to which aircraft – or rather which report of an inbound aircraft – this conversation took place? That is, do you know that the conversation you described relates to Flight 77, which hit the Pentagon?

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d. After this first scene that you described last May, did you later hear the Vice President or others reiterate the authorization to shoot down aircraft?

e. What did you know about the fighter planes that were being scrambled in response to the hijackings? Specifically, what do you remember (if anything) about planes being scrambled from Andrews Air Force Base?

(8) **Order to ground civilian aircraft:** Did you make this decision from the PEOC or before you arrived in the PEOC?

(9) **Flight 93:** In May, in response to a question from Mr. Hamilton regarding information about Flight 93, you stated that "the only information we had at that point was when it crashed."

a. Who is the "we" in this statement?

b. To your knowledge, did anyone in the PEOC have any knowledge or awareness of a hijacked plane headed to DC from Pennsylvania (which we now know was Flight 93)?

c. Just to clarify your earlier testimony, to your knowledge there was no order from the PEOC to shoot down the inbound aircraft, that we now know was Flight 93?

MISCELLANEOUS

(1) After Action Review of Emergency Response on 9/11 – was one conducted and if not, why not?

(2) To your knowledge, were any specific employees at DOT or FAA either commended or in any way disciplined in connection with the events of 9/11?

(3) Knowledge of FAA decision pre 9-11 to decommission primary radar systems? Knowledge of that issue after 9-11?

(4) In terms of air traffic control, what changes (if any) were made after 9-11?